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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/620,134	07/15/2003	Mark Roby	2853	7844
7590	03/31/2005		EXAMINER	
TYCO HEALTHCARE GROUP LP			GEHMAN, BRYON P	
150 GLOVER AVENUE			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
NORWALK, CT 06856			3728	
DATE MAILED: 03/31/2005				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/620,134	ROBY ET AL. <i>ED</i>
	Examiner Bryon P. Gehman	Art Unit 3728

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 February 2004.  
 2a) This action is FINAL.                            2b) This action is non-final.  
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-4,6-8 and 10-19 is/are pending in the application.  
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 6-8 and 10-19 is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
 6) Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.  
 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.  
 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
     Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
     Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
 a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:  
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

1. Applicant's election with traverse of species II, claims 1-4 in the paper filed February 25, 2005 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that all species have already been considered. This is not found persuasive because such in no way indicates the various species to be patentably indistinct from each other, as required to overcome a species requirement, and the restriction is maintained.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 1-4 are finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In claim 1, line 7, "to maintain a predetermined suture/pledget orientation" is indefinite, as no pledget is positively defined so as to provide any orientation between a suture and a pledget.

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1-4 are finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Erickson (3,819,039). Claims 1-4 are finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Zatarga (5,582,288). Each discloses an apparatus inherently capable of fixating a suture in a substantially perpendicular orientation relative to a pledget, the structure claimed comprising a block (10; 18; respectively) having at least one slit (22-25; 22) to engage a portion of a first end portion of a suture (at or near 13; top of 18 in the Figure) and at least a portion of a second end of the suture (at or near 14; bottom of 18 in the Figure) so as to maintain a suture/pledget orientation should a suture and pledget be secured thereto. A recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim. See *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963).

As to claim 2, each discloses the at least one slit capable of maintaining a parallel relationship between end portions of the suture (the end portions being arbitrary).

As to claim 3, each discloses multiple slits in the block.

As to claim 4, each discloses a first face (15; shown upper side), a second face (16; shown lower side) and a top face (11; containing the slits).

6. Applicant's arguments filed February 25, 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Since claims 1-4 do not include a suture nor a pledget, but

encompass structures absent a suture and pledget that could so act, the arguments relative to an arrangement and structure of the pledget and suture are not convincing.

7. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

8. This application contains claims 6-8 and 10-19 drawn to an invention nonelected with traverse in the paper of February 25, 2005. A complete reply to the final rejection must include cancellation of nonelected claims or other appropriate action (37 CFR 1.144) See MPEP § 821.01.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Bryon P. Gehman whose telephone number is (571)

272-4555. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Wednesday from 5:30am to 6:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mickey Yu, can be reached on (571) 272-4562. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Bryon P. Gehman  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3728

BPG